Ickes' Aid Suspended Over Letter

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 19.—Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes has suspended George N. Briggs, a $5000-a-year assistant, pending completion of a Federal grand jury investigation into the alleged forgery of a letter which purported to be a declaration by Harry Hopkins that Wendell Willkie would be the 1944 GOP Presidential nominee.

Ickes acted after Sen. William Langer (R., N. D.) charged that Ickes and Briggs were connected with the publication of the "Hopkins Letter" in C. Nelson Sparks' book *One Man—Wendell Willkie.*

Ickes asked an opportunity to appear before the grand jury, repeating his denial of any connection with the letter, as did Briggs who added the charge of a double-barreled plot to "wreck" Ickes.

"I wouldn't be surprised if the forger turned up shortly," said Henry A. Schweinhaut, Justice Dept. attorney.

Meanwhile, Sen. Harley M. Kilgore (D., W. Va.) called a special meeting of his Senate Elections Subcommittee to determine whether circumstances surrounding Willkie's 1940 nomination should be investigated.